

# Mason Matters!

Fall 2016

## Mason District Supervisor Penny Gross

MASON GOVERNMENTAL CENTER, 6507 COLUMBIA PIKE, ANNANDALE VA 22003  
PHONE: 703/256-7717 FAX: 703/354-8419 E-MAIL: [mason@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:mason@fairfaxcounty.gov)

## A Message From Supervisor Gross

### Special Interest Articles:

- *Absentee Voting and Bond Information*
- *Three Bond Referenda on the 2016 Ballot*
- *Meals Tax Referendum*
- *National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day*
- *Prepare for Cold and Flu Season*
- *Land Use News*
- *Fall Fire and Life Safety Tips*
- *Coming Attractions*
- *Community Notes*
- *Mason District Holiday Town Gathering on December 12*

LOOK FOR **MASON MATTERS!** THE TELEVISION SHOW  
on Cable Channel 16  
EVERY THURSDAY AT 7 P.M.  
EVERY FRIDAY & SUNDAY AT 6:30 P.M.  
DAILY ON THE WEB AT [WWW.FAIRFAXCOUNTY.GOV/MASON](http://WWW.FAIRFAXCOUNTY.GOV/MASON)

Dear Mason District Neighbor:

This year, 2016, has proven to be a very busy year, and a very important event – the quadrennial presidential election – is still to come. Election Day is **Tuesday, November 8**, and your regular polling place will be open from 6 a.m. until 7 p.m. In-person absentee voting at the Mason District Governmental Center began earlier this month. Please see the information on page 2 of this newsletter for important information about voting hours at the satellite locations. A valid photo ID is required, whether voting on Election Day or absentee in-person.

If you wish to vote absentee by mail, you should apply NOW. Your early and timely application will help ensure that you receive your absentee ballot with plenty of time to complete it and mail it back to the Office of Elections. You can request an absentee ballot by mail, fax, e-mail, or online, but your **completed ballot must be received by the Office of Elections by 7 p.m. on November 8** to be counted. Log on to [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections) for more election information.

In addition to the presidential and congressional races, voters are asked to consider two Commonwealth of Virginia Proposed Constitutional Amendments, three Fairfax County Bond questions – for a transportation bond, parks and park facilities bond, and a human services and community development bond – as well as a Fairfax County meals tax referendum. More information is available on page 2. A little time spent reading the ballot questions in advance can expedite your way through the lines at your polling place on Election Day.

Fairfax County is renowned for its robust volunteer community engagement opportunities. There are more than 80 boards, authorities, and commissions (BACs) to which members of the Board of Supervisors may appoint district representatives. Most BACs meet monthly in the evening at the main government center complex in Fairfax. If you have some free time and would like to be considered for a future volunteer position, please send your resume and areas of interest to [mason@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:mason@fairfaxcounty.gov).

Land use applications continue to receive a lot of interest and scrutiny in the community. To check the status of land use applications in Mason District, please contact my office at [mason@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:mason@fairfaxcounty.gov), or visit <http://ldsnet.fairfaxcounty.gov/ldsnet/CurrentInProcessBOS.aspx> for more information.

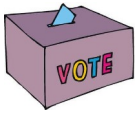
The 21st annual Mason District Holiday Town Gathering will be held on Monday, December 12, at 7 p.m., at the Mason District Governmental Center, 6507 Columbia Pike in Annandale. Join your friends and neighbors in this traditional kick-off to the holiday season. Musical entertainment, refreshments, and door prizes will be featured, along with my annual State of Mason District report. I look forward to seeing you there.

It is an honor and a privilege to serve as your Mason District Supervisor, and I hope you will let me know whenever my staff and I can be of assistance to you. My office is open from 8:30 a.m. until 6 p.m. Monday through Friday, and we are ready to help with any county-related matter.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Penny Gross'.

## Absentee Voting and Information for the November 8 Election



Registered voters may vote absentee in person at seven satellite locations, including the **Mason District Governmental Center**, 6507 Columbia Pike in Annandale, from **October 17 to November 5**.

Voting hours are **Monday through Friday**, from 2 to 8 p.m. The site will be **closed on Monday, October 10** in observance of **Columbus Day**. Voting also is available **Saturdays, October 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, and November 5 (last day to vote absentee in-person)**, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. **Please bring a current and valid photo identification.**

The **deadline to apply for an absentee ballot** by mail, fax, e-mail or online is **Tuesday, November 1 at 5 p.m.** Send completed absentee ballot applications to: **Mail:** Office of Elections, Box 10161, Fairfax, VA 22038; **Fax:** 703-324-3725; or **E-Mail:** [absenteeballot@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:absenteeballot@fairfaxcounty.gov). For inclusion in the Election, all mailed absentee ballots **MUST** be received at the Office of Elections by 7 p.m. on Election Day, **November 8, 2016**.

Students attending college outside the metropolitan area may call the registrar's office at 703-222-0776 to request an application for an absentee ballot. When the registrar receives the completed ballot application, a ballot will be sent directly to the student. Students' completed ballots must be received in the Electoral Board Office before 7 p.m. on Election Day.

If you have moved since you last voted, **update your address before October 17**. First-time voters are urged to contact the Fairfax County Office of Elections for instructions. Information is available on-line at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections/absentee.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections/absentee.htm), by phone at 703-222-0776; TTY 711, or by e-mail at [voting@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:voting@fairfaxcounty.gov). **The deadline to register to vote is October 17, 2016 at 5 p.m.; online: 11:59 p.m.**

**Please Note:** Because of a change in the law, Voter Information Cards may no longer be used for identification at the polls due to the requirement for a photo ID. **Fairfax County no longer issues Voter Identification Cards.** The Electoral Board now provides a letter as an acknowledgment of registration. **This letter is not an acceptable form of ID for voting.**

## Meals Tax Referendum



On the November 8, 2016 ballot, Fairfax County voters will be asked to vote **YES** or **NO** on a meals tax question. The Board of Supervisors does not have the authority to implement a meals tax unless approved by voters. The question asks voters to allow the Board of Supervisors to impose a **4 percent** meals tax on certain prepared foods, which would be paid by residents, commuters, and tourists.

If the majority of voters approve the meals tax, the Board of Supervisors would adopt an ordinance and dedicate the revenues to two purposes, which are specified in the ballot question. First, **70 percent** of the net revenues would be dedicated to Fairfax County Public Schools. Second, **30 percent** of the net revenues would be dedicated to county services, capital improvements and property tax relief. Additional information is available at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/mealstax/](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/mealstax/).

## Three Bond Referenda Included on the 2016 Ballot

Bonds are the principal means by which Fairfax County raises funds to address on-going needs in the county without raising taxes. There are three proposed bond referenda on the ballot for the November 8, 2016 election.



The Parks and Park Facilities Bond totals \$107 million, of which \$97.7 million would go to the Fairfax County Park Authority, and \$12.3 million would pay for the county's share of costs for the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority.



The Human Services/Community Development Bond totals \$85 million to provide funds to finance the cost of human services facilities and community development facilities, including the construction and reconstruction of community centers and shelters.



The Transportation Bond totals \$120 million to finance, for the next four years, the county's share under the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Compact, of the cost of constructing, reconstructing, improving and acquiring transportation improvements and facilities.

For more information about the 2016 Bond Referenda, please visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/bond/](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/bond/), or call the Fairfax County Office of Public Affairs at 703-324-3187.

## Participate in National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day

The Fairfax County Police Department, in collaboration with the Drug Enforcement Agency, will collect unneeded, unused, and expired medications on **Saturday, October 22, from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.** In **Mason District**, residents may drop off prescription drugs at the following locations:

**Mason District Police Station Front Parking Lot**  
6507 Columbia Pike in Annandale;

**Franconia District Police Station Front Parking Lot**  
6121 Franconia Road in Alexandria; and

**West Springfield District Police Station Front Parking Lot**  
6140 Rolling Road in Springfield

Please bring prescription medications in their original containers, and cross out identifying information. Drop off is free and anonymous.

## Prepare for cold and flu season!



A flu shot can help minimize the chance of spreading the flu virus in our community. For information about the 2016-2017 flu season, visit the Fairfax County Health Department's Web site at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd/flu/](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd/flu/), or call 703-246-2411; TTY 711.

**When you set your clocks back one hour on November 6 to return to standard time, remember to change the batteries in smoke alarms throughout your home.**



## Land Use News

**ULI Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) Recommend Improvements for Annandale** – In July, after a comprehensive review of downtown Annandale, Urban Land Institute panelists made four primary recommendations to help spur revitalization in Annandale in the short to medium timeframe. Their recommendations focused on Columbia Pike and include:

- ◆ Establish a more comprehensive organization to focus on downtown Annandale, such as the creation of a Business Improvement District or Main Street Program.
- ◆ Implement Columbia Pike road and streetscape improvements with the intention of creating on-street parking to create a more Main Street feel.
- ◆ Pursue a temporary urban park/plaza at the corner of Tom Davis Drive and Columbia Pike.
- ◆ Help spur redevelopment via a catalytic project idea. Utilize the county-owned ACCA property, combined with the Annandale Volunteer Fire Department property, to leverage a public-private partnership deal. The panelists suggested a mixed-use concept with multi-family housing, ground floor retail, retention of the ACCA use, and the inclusion of a municipal parking garage and/or community center.

Information about the TAP's recommendations is available at [www.fcrcvit.org/annandale/index.htm](http://www.fcrcvit.org/annandale/index.htm), by e-mail at [revitalization@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:revitalization@fairfaxcounty.gov), or call 703-324-9300; TTY 711.

**New Street Designs in Annandale** – Whether you are driving, bicycling, or walking in Annandale, you may have noticed new pavement and markings. The Fairfax County Department of Transportation and the Virginia Department of Transportation partnered to update many streets in Annandale, with a focus on reducing speeds, providing more transportation options to residents and visitors, and improving bicycle and pedestrian safety. Changes include narrowing vehicle lanes to add bike lanes, reducing the number of lanes to provide center turn lanes, bike lanes and reduce pedestrian crossing distances, and upgrading crosswalks and curb ramps. Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fcdot/bike](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fcdot/bike) for more information.



Coalition for Smarter Growth Executive Director Stewart Schwartz presents Mason District Supervisor Penny Gross with the 2016 Prince Livable Communities Leadership Award. The award recognizes her work with the revitalization of Fairfax's older neighborhoods, leading community planning initiatives in Seven Corners, Bailey's Crossroads, and other commercial centers in Mason District.

Photo by Chris Langford Photography

## Fall Fire and Life Safety Tips

Fairfax County's Fire and Rescue Department offers safety tips for a safe and enjoyable fall and winter season.

**Fireplace Safety:** Inspect fireplaces to ensure chimneys are clean and have a cap. Keep top clear of tree limbs or debris. Store ashes in a metal container; dampen with water and seal. Keep the container outside for additional safety.

**Candle Safety:** Never leave burning candles unattended or where children and pets can access them. Do not burn candles near windows or doorways.

**Heater Safety:** Keep at least three feet of clearance between combustibles. Never leave a heater on when you are not in the room or when sleeping.

Firefighters throughout Mason District urge you to visit their Web site [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fr](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fr), or call 703-246-3801 to learn more about fire safety and fire prevention resources.

## Coming Attractions

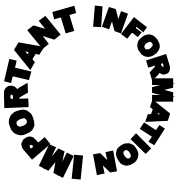
- The **Annandale Fall Festival Parade** will be held on **Saturday, October 22, from 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.** For more information, and to participate, contact the Annandale Chamber of Commerce at 703-256-7232, or visit [www.annandalechamber.com](http://www.annandalechamber.com).
- The Annandale (Station 8) and Bailey's Crossroads (Station 10) Volunteer Fire Departments invite you to an **All You Can Eat Crab Leg and Shrimp Feast** on **Sunday, October 30, 2 - 5 p.m.** at the Annandale Volunteer Fire Department Station, 7128 Columbia Pike in Annandale. Tickets available online at [www.avfd.org](http://www.avfd.org). For more information, call 703-941-1328.
- Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road in Alexandria, will host a **Gardener's Holiday Open House** on **Sunday, December 4, 12 - 4 p.m.** Treat your children to a holiday puppet show at 1 p.m. and 3 p.m., enjoy seasonal displays, live music and refreshments. To register in advance, call 703-642-5173, or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/greenspring](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/greenspring).
- Hidden Oaks Nature Center, 7701 Royce Street in Annandale, will host a **Squirrel's Nutcracker Tea Party** on **Sunday, December 11, 2 - 3:30 p.m.** Enjoy a twist on the classic tale. Learn fun facts and treat yourself to a sit-down tea with gingerbread treats. Reservations are required and can be made online at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/hiddenoaks](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/hiddenoaks), or call 703-941-1065.
- **AARP volunteers will return in 2017** to provide free tax help to residents, from February 1 to April 18, at the Mason District Governmental Center, 6507 Columbia Pike in Annandale. All returns will be filed electronically. For more information about AARP Tax Aide, visit [www.aarp.org/taxaide](http://www.aarp.org/taxaide), or call 1-888-227-7669.



SUPERVISOR PENELOPE A. "PENNY" GROSS  
MASON DISTRICT GOVERNMENTAL CENTER  
6507 COLUMBIA PIKE  
ANNANDALE, VA 22003

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## *Mason Matters! The Newsletter to Keep YOU Informed*

### Community Notes

- The **Recycling Drop-off Center**, located at 7200 Little River Turnpike in Annandale, will **close permanently** on **Tuesday, November 1, 2016**. Recent increases of illegal dumping and the amount of material disposed necessitated the closure. Recycling drop-off centers pre-date curbside collection of recyclables, which is required by Chapter 109.1 of the Fairfax County Code. For information about waste management in Fairfax County, call 703-324-5230; TTY 711.
- The Fairfax County Police Department, Mason District Station, remodeled its Web site so residents can communicate their neighborhood concerns directly to the officers who would address them. Visit the Web site to find information about frequent topics of concern, and perhaps learn about something new, at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/police/stations/mason/](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/police/stations/mason/).
- The Annandale Christian Community for Action (ACCA) is a volunteer organization serving neighbors in dire need, including furniture. Please call 703-256-9513 and ACCA will pick up your donated furniture and give you a tax deductible receipt. The most needed items are mattresses/box springs (single, double, or queen size) sofas (not sleeper types), kitchen/dining room tables, and chairs, chests of drawers/dressers, coffee tables, end tables, and microwaves.
- Fairfax County Department of Family Services needs volunteers from late January to April 2017 (three to five hours once or twice a week) for its Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program, which provides free tax assistance to individuals and families with low-income. Tax preparers and screeners should have experience preparing a tax return, but no experience is necessary for interpreters and greeters. Classroom and/or online training available December 2016 to January 2017, and all tax preparers must pass an IRS certification test. For more information, and to register as a volunteer, visit [www.nvacash.org](http://www.nvacash.org), or call Tatyana Chambers at 703-533-5702.

## **Mason District's Holiday Town Gathering**

**Monday, December 12 at 7 p.m.**

Mason District Governmental Center, Main Community Room

Usher in the winter season at Mason District's Holiday Town Gathering, hosted by Supervisor Penny Gross. Enjoy live seasonal music, refreshments, win door prizes, and learn about the activities and accomplishments throughout Mason District.

### **Mason District Supervisor Penny Gross**

6507 Columbia Pike  
Annandale, VA 22003

PHONE:  
703/256-7717; TTY 711

FAX:  
703/354-8419

E-MAIL:  
[mason@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:mason@fairfaxcounty.gov)

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mason](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/mason)